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C O N F I D E N T I A L AIT TAIPEI 002009

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HHS FOR ERIKA ELVANDER, GENEVA FOR DAVID HOHMAN, BRUSSELS
FOR USMISSION

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TAGS: [AMED](#) [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [PREL](#) [WHO](#) [IO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: TAIWAN PLEASED WITH OUTCOME OF WHA MEETINGS: READY
TO PUSH MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

REF: 05 TAIPEI 4852

Classified By: AIT DEPUTY DIRECTOR DAVID J KEEGAN FOR REASONS 1.4 B/D

11. (C) SUMMARY. Action request para 10. VFM Michael Kau told AIT Acting Director that Taiwan was very pleased with the outcome of its pragmatic approach to the WHA Meeting in Geneva. He expressed Taiwan's appreciation for support from the US (citing particularly Health Attache David Hohman in Geneva), the EU, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand and from unexpected quarters, such as Mongolia. Taiwan is now working to expand its "meaningful participation" in WHO meetings, as well as with GOARN and WHO regional entities. Taiwan requests U.S. assistance on nomenclature which will continue to pose problems for future Taiwan participation. END SUMMARY.

TAIWAN THANKS U.S. AND OTHERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT

12. (C) Acting Director David Keegan (ADIR) together with POLOFF and ESTHOFF, met with Vice Foreign Minister Michael Kau, MOFA International Organizations Director-General John Chen and MOH Director-General Peter Chang to get a read-out of their participation in the WHA meetings in Geneva May 22-24. Kau expressed great appreciation for the assistance rendered to Taiwan in Geneva, especially Taiwan Minister of Health Hou Shen-mou's meeting with HHS Secretary Leavitt; he particularly expressed gratitude for the "very active and timely" assistance from US Mission Health Attache David Hohman. He also cited the assistance of other supporters: Japan and its envoy in Geneva Minami; the EU, particularly EU Troika intervention with former WHO DG Lee about Taiwan participation; Canada, Australia and New Zealand; as well as from unexpected quarters such as Mongolia in support of Taiwan's meaningful participation in WHO activities. Taiwan also received an e-mail copy of WHO Director-General Lee's letter to HHS Secretary Leavitt, Kau said. On DG Lee's sudden death in Geneva, Kau suggested it was connected to two issues which had greatly worried Lee in the days before he died -- Taiwan and HAMAS' participation in WHO.

13. (C) Kau told the ADIR that Taiwan went to the WHA meeting in Geneva with four priorities: participation in technical

meetings, participation in WHO regional activities, GOARN membership, and Taiwan's International Health Regulations (IHRs) focal point for IHR. On GOARN membership, Kau explained that WHO agreed to put Taiwan on the Outbreak Verification List (OVL) under TCDC Chief Stephen Kuo's name, but Kau argued that this was just a symbolic gesture that carried little substance. It may actually undercut Taiwan efforts at GOARN membership, he implied, since it allowed the PRC to argue that since Taiwan was already on the OVL list it did not need to become a full fledged member of GOARN. (Note: According to TCDC contacts, OVL is just an e-mail based information dissemination network for disease outbreaks; it does not provide the access to information on upcoming meetings that Taiwan needs. End note.)

WHAT'S NEXT FOR TAIWAN?

14. (C) ADIR urged Kau and his colleagues to move forward on the basis of the positive results Taiwan achieved at the WHA and focus on next steps to continue expanding Taiwan participation in WHO activities in the run up to next year's WHA meeting. Kau responded that Taiwan intends to continue taking a low key and "flexible pragmatic" approach to WHO pressing for meaningful participation in technical meetings. Taiwan had participated in 14 out of 34 technical meetings over the past two years, he explained and Taiwan's top priority now is to improve on that record. Taiwan, he continued, also considers GOARN membership to be a top priority and hopes for U.S. support on GOARN. ADIR suggested that Taiwan's near-term priority should be obtaining early notification of meetings and early submission of applications to attend. John Chen interjected that GOARN training programs were a top priority for Taiwan since they were organized on a professional level. He added that many renowned educational institutions such as Harvard University were members of GOARN. ADIR asked if in that regard Taiwan might consider asking its medical schools to apply for GOARN membership as one way of circumventing the sovereign nation obstacle and advancing the objective of professional interchange.

15. (C) On Taiwan's unilateral accession to the IHRs, Kau explained that the remaining issue was to determine Taiwan's "focal point" (contact point). Another Taiwan priority, Kau continued, was to build on WHO's agreement that Taiwan could participate in some activities of WPRO, WHO's Manila-based Western Pacific Regional Office, to secure active, regular participation .

NOMENCLATURE: "TAIPEI CDC" VS. "TAIWAN, CHINA"

16. (C) Chen said that often when Taiwan has been permitted to participate in WHO meetings over the past year, the invitations would be addressed to "Taipei CDC," but when the meeting started the delegation would be addressed as "Taiwan, China." This caused much consternation back home among legislators and government officials. Chen hoped the WHO Secretariat would be able to arrange a working compromise on

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the name issue so that in the future Taiwan participation would not be jeopardized by nomenclature issues. Vice Premier Tsai Ying-wen and several legislators were, he explained, very concerned about this issue. MOH's Peter Chang agreed to provide AIT with a listing of meetings in which this name "bait and switch" occurred.

COMMENT: THE WAY AHEAD

17. (C) The WHA meetings in Geneva clearly had a positive impact on Taiwan and could provide the government of President Chen Shui-bian with maneuvering room to continue this step-by-step approach to enhancing Taiwan participation in WHO activities. The expressions of appreciation from VFM Kau to the ADIR and from President Chen to AIT/W Chairman

Burghardt June 8, together with Taiwan's pledge to continue low-key "flexible pragmatism" in furtherance of its participation in WHO activities, offer an opportunity to make headway over the coming year -- perhaps enough headway to obviate confrontation in the run up to next year's WHA meeting. VFM Kau and Taiwan CDC believes and AIT concurs, that now is the time to begin working to increase Taiwan "meaningful participation" in WHO activities in the coming months in order to set the stage for next year's WHA. There are two issues that need addressing in order to ensure Taiwan's meaningful participation: timely notification and ability to attend.

¶18. (C) Obtaining early notification of meetings: TCDC told AIT that currently Taiwan learns about a meeting through its contacts and then Taiwan contacts WHO about its interest in attending. This ad-hoc system is not working, as Taiwan learns too late about the meetings or is told by WHO it cannot attend. What Taiwan needs is to find a more reliable mechanism for timely notification, perhaps reach an understanding with WHO (an MOU?) for WHO to provide early notification to Taiwan of upcoming technical meetings.

¶19. (C) Ensuring Taiwan is able to attend technical meetings: coordination between AIT/Taipei and Taiwan working-level contacts, specifically AIT's ESTHOFF and Taiwan CDC to ensure Taiwan attends those technical meetings. AIT proposes to request Taiwan CDC to notify AIT of technical meetings where Taiwan is experiencing, or expects to experience, difficulty attending. AIT would then contact US WHO Mission in Geneva and Amembassy Beijing to coordinate appropriate action. This effort will benefit from coordination with US mission in Geneva and Amembassy Beijing, as well as ad hoc coordination with likeminded countries, notably Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the EU and some of its individual member nations, and Mongolia in support of Taiwan participation.

¶10. (C) Request comments and thoughts from Department and U.S. Mission Geneva.

KEEGAN